disappear at this accelerating rate, the end was not distant. As the Admiralty were in a condition of utter despair at the prospect of either effecting destruction of the submarine or affording protection for our ships, there is nothing surprising in the cry that came from the hearts of men whose caution exceeded their courage : " Let us agree with our adversary quickly."

One of the most lamentable effects of the new submarine campaign was the marked increase in the casualty list amongst our sailors. When a ship was sunk by gunfire the sailors had to take to the boats whatever the weather. Even when the disaster occurred within a few miles of the coast the risks were considerable, but when the ship was sunk in the Bay of Biscay or out in the Atlantic, scores of leagues from any shore, the chances of escape were precarious, and in bad weather few lived to tell the tale. It was one of the new cruelties which this conflict added to the practice of war. The old piratical plank was more humane. The agony was not so prolonged. The German plea in defence of their action was to point to their children starved by our blockade. War is a cruel business.

Was there any justification for the pessimism of British Admirals of high degree ? The Official Naval History of the War, in referring to the failure of the Admiralty to hunt down the submarine, states that *Failure of our* up to the beginning of 1917, " Our effort,

naval anti- whether considered as attack or defence.

submarine had been not only inadequate but *campaign* wj^olly inefFective.»* In home waters and the Mediterranean about 3,000 destroyers and auxiliary patrol vessels, trawlers and motor boats had been employed in chasing submarines. From

* " Naval Operations," Vol. IV, page 337.